

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of inspecting a print image that is sequentially being processed by a plurality of processing steps, comprising:

5 (a) preparing first and second-plate-image-inspection RIP data under same raster image processing (RIP) conditions, based on first and second print image data prepared in different processing steps; and

(b) comparing the first and second plate-image-inspection RIP data to detect differences in the first and second print image data.

10 2. A method according to Claim 1, wherein each of the first and second print image data represent an image in which at least one print page is laid out on a mount area in accordance with specified page layout conditions, and

15 the step (a) comprises: extracting an image region corresponding to a same print page from each print image data, based on the page layout conditions specified for each print image data.

20 3. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the step of extracting the image region comprises rotating the image region of at least one of the first and second print image data so that layout angles of the same print pages for the first and second print image data become equal to each other.

25 4. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the processing in the plurality of processing steps for the print

image data is executed in accordance with a job ticket, which stipulates processing conditions for each processing step.

5. A method according to Claim 4, wherein

5 the job ticket includes a specification as to whether or not an alert display will be performed when a result of the comparison in the step (b) indicates an image mismatch.

6. A method according to Claim 5, wherein

10 the job ticket includes selection of one among a plurality of mismatch modes including a first mismatch mode for performing an alert display when the result of the comparison indicates an image mismatch, and a second mismatch mode for stopping processing immediately thereafter when the result of the comparison indicates an image mismatch.

15

7. A method according to Claim 5, wherein

the alert display includes an instruction section for allowing a user to instruct whether or not subsequent processing will continue.

20

8. A method of inspecting a print image that is sequentially being processed by a plurality of processing steps, comprising:

(a) preparing a first RIP data by executing RIP processing on a first print image data according to first RIP processing conditions;

(b) preparing a second RIP data by executing RIP processing, in
25 accordance with second RIP processing conditions that differ from the first RIP processing conditions, on a second print image data that is obtained by carrying out another prepress processing to the first print image data;

(c) preparing first and second plate-image-inspection RIP data by executing RIP processing on the first and second print image data, respectively, in accordance with standard RIP processing conditions; and

(d) comparing the first and second plate-image-inspection RIP data to detect differences between the first and second print image data.

9. A method according to Claim 8, wherein

the standard RIP processing conditions include, as a parameter, a resolution lower than a resolution in a final plate image outputting step.

10. A method according to Claim 8, wherein

each of the first and second print image data represent an image in which at least one print page is laid out on a mount area in accordance with specified page layout conditions, and

the step (c) comprises:

extracting an image region corresponding to a same print page from each print image data, based on the page layout conditions specified for each print image data.

11. A method according to Claim 10, wherein

the step of extracting the image region comprises rotating the image region of at least one of the first and second print image data so that layout angles of the same print pages for the first and second print image data become equal to each other.

12. A method of inspecting a print image that is sequentially being processed by a plurality of processing steps, comprising:

(a) preparing a first RIP data by executing RIP processing on a first print image data according to first RIP processing conditions;

(b) preparing a second RIP data by executing RIP processing, in accordance with second RIP processing conditions that differ from the first
5 RIP processing conditions, on a second print image data obtained by carrying out another prepress processing to the first print image data;

(c) preparing a first plate-image-inspection RIP data in accordance with standard RIP processing conditions by converting the first RIP data, using a first profile representing relationship between the
10 standard RIP processing conditions and the first RIP processing conditions;

(d) preparing a second plate-image-inspection RIP data in accordance with the standard RIP processing conditions by converting the second RIP data, using a second profile representing relationship between the standard RIP processing conditions and the second RIP processing
15 conditions; and

(e) comparing the first and second plate-image-inspection RIP data to detect differences between the first and second print image data.

13. A method according to Claim 12, wherein
20 the standard RIP processing conditions include, as a parameter, a resolution lower than a resolution in a final plate image outputting step.

14. A method according to Claim 12, wherein
each of the first and second print image data represent an image
25 in which at least one print page is laid out on a mount area in accordance with specified page layout conditions, and

each of the steps (c) and (d) comprises:

extracting an image region corresponding to a same print page from each print image data, based on the page layout conditions specified for each print image data.

5 15. A method according to Claim 14, wherein
the step of extracting the image region comprises rotating the image region of at least one of the first and second print image data so that layout angles of the same print pages for the first and second print image data become equal to each other.

10

16. A method of inspecting a print image that is sequentially being processed by a plurality of processing steps, comprising:

(a) preparing a first RIP data by executing RIP processing on a first print image data according to first RIP processing conditions;

15 (b) preparing a second RIP data by executing RIP processing, in accordance with second RIP processing conditions that differ from the first RIP processing conditions, on a second print image data obtained by carrying out another prepress processing to the first print image data;

20 (c) preparing first and second plate-image-inspection RIP data in accordance with same RIP processing conditions by converting at least one of the first and second RIP data, based on a profile representing relationship between the first and second RIP processing conditions; and

(d) comparing the first and second plate-image-inspection RIP data to detect differences between the first and second print image data.

25

17. A method according to Claim 16, wherein
each of the first and second print image data represent an image

in which at least one print page is laid out on a mount area in accordance with specified page layout conditions, and

the step (c) comprises:

5 extracting an image region corresponding to a same print page from each of the first and second RIP data, based on the page layout conditions specified for each print image data.

18. A method according to Claim 17, wherein

10 the step of extracting the image region comprises rotating the image region of at least one of the first and second RIP data so that layout angles of the same print pages for the first and second RIP data become equal to each other.

19. A prepress system capable of executing a plate image inspection for inspecting a print image that is sequentially being processed by a plurality of processing steps, A prepress system comprising:

15 an RIP processor for preparing first and second-plate-image-inspection RIP data under same RIP conditions, based on first and second print image data prepared in different processing steps; and

20 a comparator for comparing the first and second plate-image-inspection RIP data to detect differences in the first and second print image data.

25 20. A prepress system according to Claim 19, wherein

each of the first and second print image data represent an image in which at least one print page is laid out on a mount area in accordance

with specified page layout conditions, and

the prepress system further comprises:

an image region extracting section for extracting an image region corresponding to a same print page from each print image data,
5 based on the page layout conditions specified for each print image data.

21. A prepress system according to Claim 20, wherein

the image region extracting section is configured to rotate the image region of at least one of the first and second print image data so that
10 layout angles of the same print pages for the first and second print image data become equal to each other.

22. A prepress system according to Claim 19, wherein

the processing in the plurality of processing steps for the print
15 image data is executed in accordance with a job ticket, which stipulates processing conditions for each processing step.

23. A prepress system according to Claim 22, wherein

the job ticket includes a specification as to whether or not an
20 alert display will be performed when a result of the comparison in the step (b) indicates an image mismatch.

24. A prepress system according to Claim 23, wherein

the job ticket includes selection of one among a plurality of
25 mismatch modes including a first mismatch mode for performing an alert display when the result of the comparison indicates an image mismatch, and a second mismatch mode for stopping processing immediately

thereafter when the result of the comparison indicates an image mismatch.

25. A prepress system according to Claim 23, wherein
the alert display includes an instruction section for allowing a
5 user to instruct whether or not subsequent processing will continue.

26. A prepress system capable of executing a plate image
inspection for inspecting a print image that is sequentially being processed
by a plurality of processing steps, the prepress system comprising:
10 a first RIP processor for preparing a first RIP data by executing
RIP processing on a first print image data according to first RIP processing
conditions;
a second RIP processor for preparing a second RIP data by
executing RIP processing, in accordance with second RIP processing
15 conditions that differ from the first RIP processing conditions, on a second
print image data that is obtained by carrying out another prepress
processing to the first print image data;
a third RIP processor for preparing first and second
plate-image-inspection RIP data by executing RIP processing on the first
20 and second print image data, respectively, in accordance with standard RIP
processing conditions; and
a comparator for comparing the first and second
plate-image-inspection RIP data to detect differences between the first and
second print image data.

25

27. A prepress system according to Claim 26, wherein
the standard RIP processing conditions include, as a parameter,

a resolution lower than a resolution in a final plate image outputting step.

28. A prepress system according to Claim 26, wherein

each of the first and second print image data represent an image
5 in which at least one print page is laid out on a mount area in accordance
with specified page layout conditions, and

the prepress system further comprises:

an image region extracting section for extracting an image
region corresponding to a same print page from each print image data,
10 based on the page layout conditions specified for each print image data.

29. A prepress system according to Claim 28, wherein

the image region extracting section is configured to rotate the
image region of at least one of the first and second print image data so that
15 layout angles of the same print pages for the first and second print image
data become equal to each other.

30. A prepress system capable of executing a plate image

inspection for inspecting a print image that is sequentially being processed
20 by a plurality of processing steps, the prepress system comprising:

a first RIP processor for preparing a first RIP data by executing
RIP processing on a first print image data according to first RIP processing
conditions;

a second RIP processor for preparing a second RIP data by
25 executing RIP processing, in accordance with second RIP processing
conditions that differ from the first RIP processing conditions, on a second
print image data obtained by carrying out another prepress processing to

the first print image data;

a converter for preparing a first plate-image-inspection RIP data in accordance with standard RIP processing conditions by converting the first RIP data, using a first profile representing relationship between the standard RIP processing conditions and the first RIP processing conditions, and for preparing a second plate-image-inspection RIP data in accordance with the standard RIP processing conditions by converting the second RIP data, using a second profile representing relationship between the standard RIP processing conditions and the second RIP processing conditions; and

a comparator for comparing the first and second plate-image-inspection RIP data to detect differences between the first and second print image data.

31. A prepress system according to Claim 30, wherein the standard RIP processing conditions include, as a parameter, a resolution lower than a resolution in a final plate image outputting step.

32. A prepress system according to Claim 30, wherein each of the first and second print image data represent an image in which at least one print page is laid out on a mount area in accordance with specified page layout conditions, and

the prepress system further comprises:

an image region extracting section for extracting an image region corresponding to a same print page from each print image data, based on the page layout conditions specified for each print image data.

33. A prepress system according to Claim 32, wherein

the image region extracting section is configured to rotate the image region of at least one of the first and second print image data so that layout angles of the same print pages for the first and second print image data become equal to each other.

34. A prepress system capable of executing a plate image inspection for inspecting a print image that is sequentially being processed by a plurality of processing steps, the prepress system comprising:

a first RIP processor for preparing a first RIP data by executing RIP processing on a first print image data according to first RIP processing conditions;

a second RIP processor for preparing a second RIP data by executing RIP processing, in accordance with second RIP processing conditions that differ from the first RIP processing conditions, on a second print image data obtained by carrying out another prepress processing to the first print image data;

a converter for preparing first and second plate-image-inspection RIP data in accordance with same RIP processing conditions by converting at least one of the first and second RIP data, based on a profile representing relationship between the first and second RIP processing conditions; and

a comparator for comparing the first and second plate-image-inspection RIP data to detect differences between the first and second print image data.

35. A prepress system according to Claim 34, wherein

each of the first and second print image data represent an image

in which at least one print page is laid out on a mount area in accordance with specified page layout conditions, and

the prepress system further comprises:

5 an image region extracting section for extracting an image region corresponding to a same print page from each of the first and second RIP data, based on the page layout conditions specified for each print image data.

36. A prepress system according to Claim 35, wherein

10 the image region extracting section is configured to rotate the image region of at least one of the first and second RIP data so that layout angles of the same print pages for the first and second RIP data become equal to each other.